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A new species of Lepidochrysops Hedicke from the south-western Cape (Lepidoptera, Rhopalocera, Lycaenidae)

by

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SYNOPSIS

A description and figures are given of the new lycaenid species *Lepidochrysops mcgregori*, a member of the *methymna* group. This species was found in non-succulent Karoo in the Calvinia district of the south-western Cape Province during September.

Family *LYCAENIDAE*

Genus *Lepidochrysops* Hedicke

Lepidochrysops mcgregori sp. nov. (Figs. 1, 2)

♂. *Holotype:* Antennae black with white rings. Palpi black above, white below. Eyes black with white collar.

Wings: Upperside (fig. 1)—both wings brown with golden sheen which is considerably brighter than its congeners *L. bacchus* Riley and *L. southeyae* Pennington. The bases are dark brown. Both wings have dark internervular submarginal marks, which are indistinct and outwardly edged narrowly with white in the hind-wing. The hindmargins have a thin prominent black line. Cilia very white with black interruptions at the end of the veins. Underside (fig. 2)—all the basal and discal spots are white-ringed in both wings.

Fore-wing: Darkish slate-grey. There is a large black discocellular spot, sharply angled at vein 5. The discal row of six spots is slightly curved, the upper three in areas 4 to 6 being round and black, and larger than those in areas 1 to 3. Six heart-shaped submarginal spots are darker than ground colour. Beyond them angled white marks pierce the hindmarginal black line in the middle of each area and unite with the white parts of the cilia.

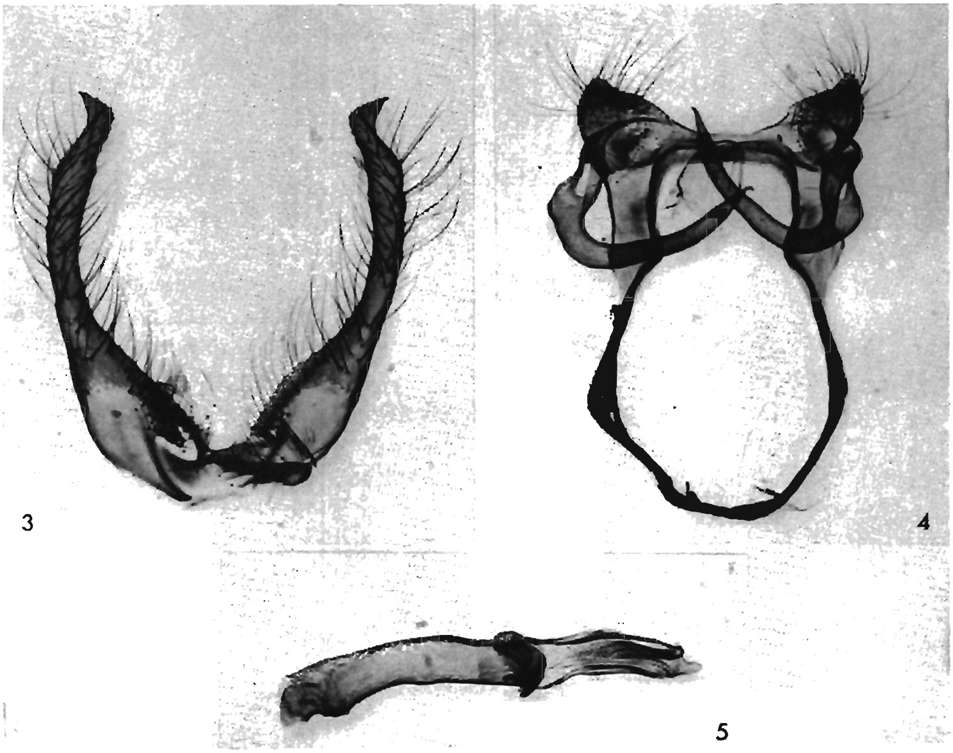
Hind-wing: There are three black basal spots, one in area 7, one in cell and one on inner margin. The upper two have dark streaks extending into the base almost at right angles to each other. The discocellular spot is larger, blacker and more angled than it is in the fore-wing—it is almost L-shaped. Discal row of eight black spots, with those in 1c, 4 and 5 further from the base and slightly larger than the rest. Prominent white sagittate marks, pointing towards each of the discal spots, are separated from the usual submarginal spots by blackish brown. Cilia as in fore-wing.

♀. *Allotype:* The golden sheen is a little less bright, and the fore-wing hindmargin is rounder—otherwise in size, shape and colour it is the same as the ♂ holotype.

Paratypes; These show considerable variation. Three males have some indication of a small dark spot in area 2 of hind-wing upperside. The white edging to upperside hind-wing submarginal marks is not always present. The discal row of fore-wing underside varies greatly. In some the six spots are all the same size. Often the spots in areas 1 and 2 are missing; sometimes they are minute. One male has no spots at all. In the hind-wing of two the streaks from the basal spots are strongly developed from all three; in many there are no streaks. ♂ genitalia as in figs. 3–5.

Length of fore-wing of holotype, 13·5 mm. A/W ratio 0·48.

Distribution: The ♂ holotype and ♀ allotype, taken on the farm Glen Lyon, near Nieuwoudtville, at an altitude of 2,200 feet on 6 September, 1968, are in the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria. A pair of paratypes is in the British Museum (N.H.) London. Nine paratype ♂♂ are in Mrs Ruth Southey's collection and a paratype ♂ is in D. A. Swanepoel's collection. Seventeen ♂♂ and five ♀♀ paratypes are in my collection. All these were caught on Mr Gordon McGregor's farm on 5 and 6 September. They were flying slowly among low plants in flat, non-succulent karoo veld, often resting on twigs on the leeside of larger bushes. The first eight were found by me after 4 p.m. on the 5th of that month. Next morning Mrs Ruth Southey, my wife and I caught forty more. They were quite com-



Figs. 3–5. Genitalia of male paratype: (3) valves, (4) tegumen, viniculum and associated structures, (5) aedeagus in lateral view.

mon and spread over many acres of typical Bokkeveldberg veld. It seems likely that this very handsome small species will be found to inhabit a wide area of the Nieuwoudtville district along the road from Calvinia to Vanrhynsdorp. It had disappeared by the end of the month.

L. macgregori falls into the *methymna* group of the genus *Lepidochrysops*, which was ably revised by Cottrell (1965). It is at once distinguished by the brightness of the golden sheen on the wings.

I have much pleasure in dedicating the species to my friends Mr and Mrs Gordon McGregor, whose kindly hospitality is so well known to so many visitors who go to Glen Lyon each spring to enjoy the marvellous wild flowers.

I wish to acknowledge the kind co-operation of Mr B. Stuckenberg of the Natal Museum in the preparation of the genitalia figures, and the ready help of Mr R. Wells of Pietermaritzburg in taking the photographs for the coloured plate made possible by the generosity of the Trustees of the Natal Museum.

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